

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FACILITIES DIVISION

Employee Update No. 6

November 22, 1999

INNOVATIVE FACILITIES SUPPORT INTO THE 21ST CENTURY!

~ 1997 FD Slogan~

Happy New Year!

FY 2000 is here! A new FY brings new opportunities. Are you ready for the 21st Century? You are probably tired of reading, hearing, and talking about the Y2k millennium bug! From a buildings and facilities standpoint, FD has been preparing for this event since 1997. The Area Engineers have inventoried and assessed over 800 buildings-and-facilities-related equipment. All systems and/or equipment are Y2k compliant or have contingency plans in place so there won't be a problem when the clock rolls over to January 1, 2000. Our facilities here in Beltsville, DC, and VA are in good shape as well. Even though the Department (Office of Operations) manages our office facilities at the George Washington Carver Center, South, and Whitten Buildings, contingency plans are in place. AFM and NPS will have a team of people available on January 1, 2000, to interface with the Department to assure our operations are not interrupted. For those employees located in Portals, Waterfront Center, 1800 M Street, Aerospace, Fairfax Circle in DC and VA, GSA and building managers have contingency plans in place and are in constant communications with us as well. Employees should carefully read the November 5, 1999, E-mail

from HRD on Emergency Dismissal/Closure Procedures and Y2k Issues. If you have any concerns about your building, contact Valencia Winstead or Ed Reilly.

A Promotion for Mr. Jones!

Donald B. Jones was selected for the Team Leader position in the FEB.

Don joined ARS in December 1994 as an Engineering Project Manager and has handled key Agency new laboratory construction and facility modernization projects such as the European Biological Control Laboratory in France; modernization of the Crop, Quality, and Fruit Insect Research Laboratory (Building N-01) in Weslaco, Texas; and the National Animal Disease Center in Ames, Iowa.

Don brings not only a very strong technical background in mechanical engineering facility design but also extensive supervisory, management, and leadership experience in facilities design, construction, operation, repair and maintenance.

Good luck Don in your new and challenging job!

Welcome Aboard Regina!

Regina Herchak was selected for the contracting specialist position in FCB.

She will report to duty on January 18, 2000. Regina is currently the Procurement and Assistance Officer in the NAA office where she heads up the Contracting, Agreements, Property and Procurement Office.

Regina is no stranger to FD or AFM. She has worked for ARS her entire career. Regina spent six years with PPD and a couple of years at Plum Island. Regina worked on the Procurement Modernization initiative at the department and was also selected for a 30 day development assignment in FCB in September 1998.

We are looking forward to working with Regina in her new position in headquarters. She brings a wealth of knowledge and diverse experience to the division.

Darissa Accepted into the WEL Program

Darissa Simms has been accepted into the 1999-2000 Women's Executive Leadership Program (WEL). During this year-long leadership/management training program, Darissa will participate in a total of 30 classroom training days, a 5-day shadowing assignment, three executive interviews, and a leadership developmental team exercise. In addition, the program

includes two developmental detail assignments--one 30 days and one 60 days. Congratulations Darissa on your acceptance into the WEL Program, and we wish you much success during the coming year!

Strategic Plan Update

Since the last newsletter, FD has made process in completing goals in objectives 1 and 5 as follows:

Objective 1--

FEB and Area personnel completed and issued guidance on July 30, 1999, that will aid Area Management in the placement of facility engineering support.

SHEMB is working hard to complete the production of two training videos on Radiation and Biological Safety. Production is in its final stages, and videos should be available shortly.

Objective 5--

FEB, FCB, and Area personnel are in the process of developing a plan that will outline policies and procedures to determine A-E accountability for design errors and implement measures for corrective design actions and recovery of monetary damages to the Government.

ARS Small Disadvantaged Business Contract of the Year Award

The Small Business Week was celebrated this year during the week of May 24, 1999. Hundreds of small business entrepreneurs, representatives from corporate America, Federal, State, local governments, and other private entities participated in activities held in Washington, DC. The USDA

took this opportunity to recognize their own small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses that provided exemplary services to the Department at a Small Business Awards Ceremony. The ceremony was held on May 24 by the Department's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), where the ARS "Small Disadvantaged Business Contractor of the Year" was awarded to Entech, Inc. A plaque was presented to Mr. Kam Chuen Tse, and his wife, Julia, of the Marietta, Georgia, office; and Richard McKenna of the McLean, Virginia, office, by Sally Thompson, Chief Financial Officer and Acting Secretary for Administration, OSDBU, along with Wiz Horner, Deputy Administrator, AFM, representative for ARS.

FD has contracted with Entech for the past 4 years using a cost-reimbursement Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract, under the U.S. Small Business Administration's 8(a) Program, for remedial investigation/actions and feasibility studies, nationwide. They have been instrumental to USDA by assisting ARS with the management and implementation of their environmental program requirements under the Superfund Program, as well as several other important environmental programs.

Annual Conference

The AFM Secretarial Advisory Council held its annual conference on October 28, 1999, at the National Arboretum. Highlights of the Agenda were:

- C Wiz Horner's opening remarks and a question-and-answer session

covered the OPM study of the 318 series, Quality of Life Survey participation, and the effectiveness of voicemail in AFM.

- C A presentation by Marva Nesbit, OA, on Career Strategies for the New Millennium.
- C Team Building activity, led by Toni Walls, HRD, that proved to be quite challenging and involved everyone.
- C A guided tour of the Herb Garden and Bonsai Pavilion sections of the Arboretum followed by an overview of other Arboretum research activities and facilities.

The yearly meeting was a great success!

AFM Space Downtown

RPMB has completed the relocation of most of AFM's staff downtown from the South Building to the Portals Building. This was to make room for Phase II of the South Building modernization effort--renovation of fourth wing. FMD, HRD, ITD, and PPD are now located at 1280 Maryland Avenue, SW, fifth floor, Washington, D.C. 20024. The Space Management Team of RPMB will remain at their current locations in the South Building, Room 1470.

NASS Census Division Move

In an effort to reduce departmental rental costs, the Census Division employees will move from their GSA leased space in Iverson Mall to the South Building space vacated by AFM. NASS' stay in the fourth wing

is only temporary while their new space is being renovated. The Census Division will occupy space on the fifth floor of the newly renovated third wing. Target completion date for the third wing project is May 2000.

Change in Plans

The November 1999 ARS Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Conference has been postponed. A decision has been made to participate in the USDA Safety Management Conference which will be held May 2000. The conference site has not been determined. The conference will be developed around a central theme of "Getting Back To Basics." This central theme was chosen because of the numerous new comers to the safety, health, environmental, biological, and radiological functional areas. The target audience for the conference will be the individual who serves as the collateral duty safety officer.

ARS' FY 2000 Budget

The President signed the Agriculture Appropriations Bill on October 22, 1999. The budget for ARS is about \$834 million. In addition, the bill provides \$52.5 million is for facility modernization and new construction projects and \$3.35 million for hazardous waste clean up projects at the following locations:

Buildings and Facilities	
Beltsville, MD	New Orleans, LA
Albany, CA	Wyndmoor, PA
Davis, CA	Plum Island, NY
Peoria, IL	Ames, IA
Hilo, HI	Urbana, IL
Stoneville, MS	Maricopa, AZ
Logan, UT	Manhattan, KS

Ft. Keogh, MT

Hazardous Waste Clean Up
Ames IA
East Lansing, MI
Savannah, GA
El Reno, OK

Also, the Annual Resource Management Plan discussions with the Administrator started this month. FD will pick up a few projects. This should keep us quite busy for the next few months!

AFM Quality of Work Life Survey

In March 1999, AFM employees responded to a Quality of Work Life Survey. The results of that survey were delivered to AFM management in August 1999. The topics identified as having the highest concern are as follows:

Management Concerns
Communications
Career Enhancement
Awards and Recognition
Morale
Empowerment
Space

AFM senior staff, division directors, branch chiefs and supervisors met on September 15 and 17, 1999, to discuss the survey results. Teams were formed to review the survey results and develop recommendations. Wiz Horner appointed a committee to review each team's report and provide a course of action. The committee has provided Wiz with recommendations of issues to be pursued further. Lou Welker represents FD on this committee. It is AFM's plan to develop specific

action plans and schedules for those high priority topics. The teams will be supplemented with non-supervisory AFM personnel who have knowledge of the specific topic and work with it on a recurring basis.

Upcoming Special Observances

Employees are encouraged to participate and attend special observances programs. Employees must receive approval from supervisor to participate. Upcoming Special Observances:

- C Native American Heritage Month--November
- C Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (celebrated the third Monday)--January
- C Black History Month--February
- C Women's History Month--March
- C Professional Secretaries Week (celebrated the last full week)--April
- C Take Our Daughters/Sons to Work Day (fourth Thursday)--April
- C Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month--May

For more specific information about the programs, please call Carolyn Moore or Darlene Butler on 301-504-6507 or visit the ARS EE/CR office website <http://www.ars.usda.gov/eo/>.

Vacancy Announcement

The Engineering Project Manager position closed on November 8,

1999.

Hurray for Mike and Rommy!!

USDA-ESRA held its Agency Golf Championship at Twin Shields Country Club during the month of August 1999. Rommy Ignacio, FEB and Mike Thompson, FCB won the two designated "Closest to the Pin" contests. Maybe we can get these two help the rest of us with our golf game!

The Last All Hands Meeting of the Century!

Our next all hands meeting will be held on November 30, 1999 at 9am in room 4-1255. The FD Semiannual Outstanding Employee will be announced at this meeting. Refreshments will be served. Bring your coffee!

A Challenge from BPMS!

BPMS has challenged FD to a game of volleyball. If you are interested in a friendly game of volleyball this spring, let Valencia know. We understand that Joe Garbarino has mandated his staff to take lessons every Thursday night to get ready for us!

We Need Feedback!

This newsletter will be published every quarter and will be on FD's Homepage. If you have any articles or suggestions to improve the FD Newsletter, let Valencia or Pat know.

Tolerance is the greatest gift of the mind. It requires the same effort of the brain that it takes to balance oneself on a bicycle.

~ Helen Keller ~